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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINTH MEETING (Resumption 2)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 24 November 1992, at 10 a.m.

President:	Mr. ERDOS	(Hungary)
Members:	Austria	Mr. HOHENFELLNER
	Belgium	Mr. NOTERDAEME
	Cape Verde	Mr. BARBOSA
	China	Mr. LI Daoyu
	Ecuador	Mr. AYALA LASSO
	France	Mr. LADSOUS
	India	Mr. GHAREKHAN
	Japan	Mr. HATANO
	Morocco	Mr. BENJELLOUN-TOUIMI
	Russian Federation	Mr. VORONTSOV
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Mr. PERKINS
	Venezuela	Mr. ARRIA
	Zimbabwe	Mr. MUMBENGEGWI

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The meeting resumed on Tuesday, 24 November 1992, at 10.35 a.m.

EXPRESSION OF CONDOLENCES TO THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): On behalf of the Security Council and on my own behalf I wish to express condolences to the Government and the people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on the death of the President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, His Excellency Mr. Kaysone Phomvihane, which occurred on 21 November 1992.

(a) THE SITUATION BETWEEN IRAQ AND KUWAIT

(b) LETTER DATED 2 APRIL 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TURKEY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/22435)

LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1991 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/22442)

LETTER DATED 5 MARCH 1992 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BELGIUM TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/23685 and Add.1)

LETTER DATED 3 AUGUST 1992 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BELGIUM TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/24386)

LETTER DATED 19 NOVEMBER 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BELGIUM TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/24828)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I propose now to give the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz, an opportunity to respond to the opening statement made by the President on behalf of the Security Council and to the questions and concerns expressed by members of the Council during yesterday's deliberations. I call on the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq.

Mr. AZIZ (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): At the 3059th meeting of the Security Council, held in March 1992, the President made a statement in which he addressed what he called general and specific obligations imposed upon Iraq. At this meeting, the Security Council adopted the same approach. In the March meeting, my delegation made a statement supported by evidence with respect to all the issues raised in the President's statement; many of the same issues were repeated in yesterday's statement.

Certain members of the Security Council want to give the tendentious impression that Iraq has not met several of the obligations imposed upon it, in order for them to use this inaccurate impression to justify the maintenance of the embargo.

But this is not the truth of the matter. The truth is that, despite the unjust and arbitrary nature of resolution 687 (1991) and of the other resolutions, Iraq has met the obligations imposed upon it, particularly the most substantive of those obligations, namely those which relate to the question of the economic embargo imposed upon Iraq. This is the truth that some wish to hide from the Security Council and from world public opinion.

Just as I did in March, however, I shall address the issues referred to in the statement by the President of the Security Council and in the statements of a number of those who spoke yesterday.

First, I refer to the question of boundaries. This is a question that is known to the members of the Security Council, to world public opinion and to the countries of the region. This question, in its entirety, as indicated in the letter dated 13 July 1992 from the Foreign Minister of Iraq, is a political decision that has been dictated by those who currently wield power in the Security Council and in the United Nations, especially the Government

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

of the United Kingdom and the United States Administration. The political purpose behind the resolution is quite clear: it is not only to deprive Iraq of its rights and not only to undermine its vital interests, but also to create a situation of instability in the region in order to justify the continued presence of United States and British armed forces and bases for the purpose of continuing to blackmail the present regimes in the region and continuing to plunder the region's oil resources.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

That is the truth of the matter. This is not just Iraq's point of view - it is the view of many countries of the region and of their leaders. It is also the view of observers who take a responsible stand towards the vital issues of the region.

In the face of such arbitrariness in dealing with Iraq's legitimate interests and historic rights - which are substantiated by historical evidence and realities and which were clearly detailed in the letter of the Foreign Minister of Iraq dated 21 May 1992 - we decided not to participate in the activities of the Boundary Demarcation Commission. We took that decision after having participated in that Commission's activities for a long time, because Iraq's view was not listened to in the Commission. Consequently, we came to the conclusion that participation or non-participation, on our part, in the Commission's work was going to avail nothing as the decision had been taken in advance and the determination to impose it was there.

The resignation of the Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Mochtar Kusuma-Atmadja, tells only a part of that story. Concerning this issue, the Security Council knows full well that, despite Iraq's legitimate protests and statements based on historical facts placed before the Security Council, the Iraqi authorities did not embark on any material act to hinder the Commission's activities. The reference to history is only natural. After all, history is history. The Security Council cannot embargo the mention of history nor can it change the facts of history. We cannot help wondering: has the mention of history become taboo under the new world order?

Secondly, the question of missing persons. The statements of the President of the Security Council and of a number of members raise this issue, which has been widely circulated recently, sometimes inaccurately and

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

sometimes misleadingly. False accusations have been levelled at Iraq to the effect that it is detaining persons reported as missing and refuses to return them. Those who point the finger of accusation do not tell us what interest could Iraq have in detaining Kuwaiti persons and refusing to repatriate them? No State would engage in any act of this kind and play into the hands of those who would use this to tarnish its reputation unless it has good reason for or interest in doing so. The truth of the matter is that Iraq detains no such persons. This is simply a propaganda ploy akin to the story about incubators told in the United States Congress. The aim in both cases is to tarnish Iraq's reputation and use the story as one of the many trumped up allegations that are being used as justifications for maintaining the present arbitrary posture towards Iraq and for keeping in place the embargo imposed on Iraq.

I reaffirm before the Security Council that the Iraqi authorities detains no one, Kuwaiti or otherwise. There has been a ferocious war that was called by those who waged it "Desert Storm". In that "storm", many have died and many have become missing. Iraq does not bear the responsibility for that. The responsibility belongs to those who waged the war and created the storm.

We have cooperated sincerely and objectively with the Red Cross in searching for missing persons and in trying to ascertain their fate. We continue to do so. We are prepared to continue to cooperate with the Red Cross in that endeavour, in accordance with the provisions of international humanitarian law applicable to the issue of missing persons in times of war.

Many representatives spoke yesterday on this issue and called upon us to cooperate with the Red Cross as if we had hitherto failed to cooperate with the Red Cross. Why was the Red Cross not called to speak on this issue? Mr. van der Stoel was called instead, illegally, while the representative of

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

the Red Cross was not called to have his say on the issue. The answer to those who have wondered why doesn't Iraq allow the Red Cross to visit the detention centres is very simple: there are no so-called detention centres in Iraq. There are jails - ordinary prisons as in any other country in the world. We have not objected to the Red Cross visiting any Iraqi prison to find out whether or not there are so-called detainees from Kuwait. We have not objected, but the representative of the Red Cross stressed that the ICRC is not prepared to do this unless it did so in conformity with the standardized rules it follows in visiting prisons.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Those standardized rules do not stem from norms dictated by international law but are laid down in agreements with the States concerned within the sovereignty rights of such States. For that reason, the ICRC calls those standards "service offer". Despite all this, we continue to this day to face a deliberate confusing of issues in the unfounded allegation that we do not allow the ICRC to visit the so-called detention centres. The correct manner to deal with this issue would be to provide us with files on missing persons, which include sufficient information to allow us to respond, in implementation of what the ICRC calls a process of accountability, an operation that can be fairly lengthy. We have in fact received a number of such files - a small number, however, which is nowhere near the claimed number of missing persons in the lists that have been claimed to be lists of missing persons. None the less, we have responded to some of those files according to the information available to us, in full cooperation with the ICRC. We have cooperated with the League of Arab States in this endeavour. We received a representative of the Secretary-General of the Arab League in 1991. We shall receive another envoy in a few days time.

Thirdly, concerning the contents of the paragraphs in the President's statement under the heading "Iraq's liability under international law", I have dealt with this issue in my previous statement before the Security Council in March 1992 and I quote:

> "It is worth mentioning in this regard that provisions in the resolutions provided for Iraq's liability under international law. This means that we must take into account the rules of international law when applying these provisions so that when we ask for compensation under international liability it should be based on international legal provisions, which call for justice and fairness." (S/PV.3059 (Resumption 2), p. 176)

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

The most noteworthy point that must be underscored here is that there should not be any trumped up claims, or vengeance claims or claims made with the aim of mere material gain, as this would open the way to the right to making claims for compensation for their own sake. Iraq is not represented in any way whatsoever in the machinery that deals with such claims. To our understanding, this is not compatible with international law. Nor is it compatible with precedents in this area, where it is vitally important that due process of law be observed. Due process of law calls for the establishment of a clear-cut link between fault and damage and stresses that compensation should be the direct result of that liability inasmuch as fault is linked to liability. These elements are not provided for in international law when handled by one party alone, because justice demands proof, and as regards proof, the party directly concerned should be represented directly.

Fourthly, regarding the content of paragraph 21 of the President's statement under the heading "Repayment and servicing of Iraq's foreign debt", may I reiterate what I stated in March:

> "How can Iraq now repay its debt and interest when there is an all-out embargo against it? I declare here, before the Security Council, that Iraq respects its obligations vis-à-vis lender countries. However, Iraq cannot repay these debts or service the interest on them if the blockade is not lifted and Iraq is not allowed to export its oil and recover its normal economic situation." (S/PV.3059 (Resumption 2), p. 177)

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Fifthly, in the President's statement, and the statement by the Russian representative, a reference was made to claims that Iraq had expropriated the property of other countries and companies inside Iraq. That interpretation of the matter is not correct. The Iraqi authorities informed those countries and companies that certain equipment would be used in agricultural and service projects in order to mitigate the suffering of the Iraqi people caused by the blockade. Those countries and companies were further informed that all the rights accruing to them from such use will be fully respected, in accordance with Iraq's contracts with them.

Sixthly, concerning the return of property referred to in the President's statement, may I inform the Council that the allegation that many items of property, including military equipment and private property, have not been returned, is not accurate at all and reflects the inaccurate preparation of the statement. I should like to inform the Security Council that from March 1992 through 25 October 1992, four Skyhawk aircraft and one dual-use aircraft, type 383; reserve equipment of the Kuwaiti Airlines; 68 marine units; property belonging to the Health Ministry of Kuwait; equipment belonging to the Air Force of the Kuwaiti regime; property belonging to the Ministry of Social Affairs; and property belonging to the Ministry of Housing, the Institute of Planning and the Air Force were returned. The return of such equipment and property took place in more than one operation in Iraqi airports and in other access points. Furthermore, there are now arrangements for a new centre for the return of property in the south of Safwan to return the remaining weapons and military equipment very soon.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Iraq did not delay in this. Iraq bears no responsibility whatever, as is suggested by the report. Rather, it is an operation that requires some time. The operation is undertaken by the United Nations itself. As for private property, the fact of the matter is that Iraq has to date received no demands whatsoever under the item of private property.

As for the mention in the President's statement of international terrorism, may I first note that the text is a mere repetition of the President's statement in the month of March. What we said in March should have been sufficient, in view of the clear facts of the matter. Nonetheless, may I reaffirm my statement of last March: Iraq has reaffirmed its commitments in that respect. Iraq never at any time perpetuated acts of terrorism. There is no evidence whatever that Iraq participated in any such acts.

As for the paragraph in the President's statement relating to Security Council resolution 706 (1991) and 712 (1991) - as well as the remarks by some speakers on this issue, I should like to recall my statement of last March. Those two resolutions were not adopted to mitigate part of the suffering of the Iraqi people. They were adopted with the aim of achieving tendentious political objectives. They were adopted with the aim of interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq.

In three rounds of negotiations with the United Nations, we have tried to reach a reasonable arrangement that would meet the urgent humanitarian needs of our people and set aside the tendentious political aspects, but we have reached no result whatsoever, because the influential Powers in the Security

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Council which were behind the drafting of the two resolutions have frustrated those efforts. Those Powers have even pressured some United Nations personnel, who had shown a certain degree of understanding for Iraq's legitimate and practical considerations, to change their positions.

At any rate, talk of those two resolutions after so many of the obligations relating to the economic embargo imposed by resolution 687 (1991) have been met by Iraq is but an attempt to divert attention from the essential issue here: namely the lifting of the economic embargo, in line with contents of operative paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991). Efforts should be deployed in this right direction, which alone would make it possible to address the suffering of the Iraqi people.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

As for what was said in the President's statement and in the statements by some of the other speakers before the Council, on resolution 688 (1991), I should like to reiterate what I said in my statement before the Council in March 1992, namely that we have considered, and continue to consider, this resolution a blatant interference in the internal affairs of Iraq.

I explained to the Council in detail on that occasion that in spite of our position of principle, we had reached an agreement with Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General at that time, on signing the first and second Memorandums of Understanding. The Council is aware that a third Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 22 October 1992 and that Iraq is committed to that Memorandum of Understanding and is cooperating constructively with the United Nations on the implementation of that Memorandum of Understanding.

In conclusion, with regard to this part of the President's statement as well as the statements of Mr. Hans Blix and Mr. Rolf Ekeus and other representatives, it is clear that the statement of the President has not referred to the substantive achievements made in the implementation of section C of resolution 687 (1991) while the statements of Mr. Blix and Mr. Ekeus have referred to some of those achievements.

To focus on the negative aspects, when most of them have been dealt with is intended to overshadow the positive aspects, namely the achievements that have already been made. I should like to deal with some of the points under that section in detail.

First, the question of dealing with the inspection teams. The truth is that, over the past period, we have had to deal with two types of such teams.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

The first is the one described in the statement, a group which arrives to create problems, behaves in a provocative manner, that would infringe upon the sovereignty and dignity of the country; the second type of inspection team is a group which accomplishes its task in a professional manner and without any problems.

We have dealt with the first type - which included some elements which were instructed by certain parties to create problems and crises - in a balanced manner that preserved the sovereignty and dignity of the country on the one hand, and ensured practical cooperation on the other. We have been successful in containing many of the problems such groups created and have managed to focus on the sor: of practical and professional conduct that was required to achieve the objectives of resolution 687 (1991).

We have dealt with the second type of inspection teams - the type that accomplished their tasks in a professional and practical manner - in all seriousness and in an objective manner Our Iraqi specialists have spared no effort in making available to those teams all that was needed to enable them to accomplish their tasks. Those who were fair-minded amongst the Chairmen of these inspection teams have declared in their public statements that they were given positive and constructive cooperation by Iraqi authorities.

Yesterday, we heard many allegations regarding dealings with the inspection teams. These allegations reflect a perverse manner of dealing with Iraq. Let me say it frankly: the people of Iraq feel that the United Nations bears the responsibility for its bitter suffering, a suffering brought about by the continued blockade imposed upon Iraq. This feeling of bitterness with regard to the United Nations is a fact that would be perfectly clear to any fair-minded person who visits Iraq. Therefore, we cannot control the feelings

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

of the population. As for governmental authorities, although officials share the feelings of the populace, because they are part of that populace, they make the utmost effort to make available to the inspection teams, and other elements of the United Nations, all that they need to do their work. We still adhere to that approach.

The substantive accomplishments made so far in relation to section C of resolution 687 (1991) could not have been possible had it not been for the cooperation extended by Iraqi authorities.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Secondly, as regards the remarks made in the statement about future monitoring, last March I said:

"Iraq, through its acceptance of resolution 687 (1991), has accepted the principle of verification of compliance in the future.

"Iraq reaffirms ... that Iraq's requirements of national sovereignty and territorial integrity (should) be respected. Iraq asks the Security Council to guarantee those principles. ... Understanding by the Council of the principles and foundations of the legitimate requests made by Iraq ... would lead to the fair, just and objective fulfilment of the essential obligations placed upon Iraq in resolutions 707 (1991) and 715 (1991) in such a way as to reassure the Council." (S/PV.3059 (Resumption 2), pp. 173-175)

That was what I said in March, and that is what I reaffirm before the Council today.

As for the remaining questions under section C of resolution 687 (1991), the statement of the President, as well as the statements by Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Blix, have referred to aspects that were not agreed upon or have not as yet been implemented. As I said in March, Iraq stands ready to enter into a constructive and objective dialogue with both UNSCOM and the IAEA to deal with those aspects objectively on the basis of fair and just principles.

However, the Council should seriously consider discharging its obligations towards Iraq, especially those obligations under paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991). To talk about implementing paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of that resolution and overlook the legal and practical link between those paragraphs and paragraph 22, as provided for in resolution 687 (1991) itself means that Iraq is required to carry out obligations imposed upon it

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

without the Council following suit by carrying out its own obligations towards Iraq.

The dialogue we suggest be undertaken with the Chairman of UNSCOM and the Director General of the IAEA should be conducted in the context of such a legal and practical relationship.

In the statements of members of the Council yesterday, remarks were made on several questions. I should like to deal with some of them.

First, on the question of the Kurds and the alleged economic blockade imposed against the three northern governorates, the French representative spoke of the understanding between the Iraqi authorities and the Kurds. Last March, I explained this matter to the Council. I said that the talks had been held in Baghdad between the Iraqi authorities and the representatives of the Kurdish parties, foremost among them Massud Barzani and Jalal Talabani. Those talks went on for four months. I was one of those who took part in them. At the end of August 1991, we were able to reach a comprehensive draft agreement that dealt with all questions: the formula for autonomy, the way in which the Kurdish parties would participate in government bodies, and the democratic system in the country. We agreed to enact a new law on the formation of political parties. We agreed that free elections would take place in the country for the election of a new Parliament within a period of one year from the date of agreement; we agreed to conduct elections in the Kurdistan area, in which Kurdish parties would take part, for the election of a new Legislative Council. We agreed to deal with all the problems of the past.

Having reached that draft agreement with the delegation of the Kurdish parties headed by Massud Barzani, Barzani asked to go to Shaklawa to present that draft agreement to the rest of the leadership. When he arrived there, he

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

found that the United States Administration had already informed the Kurdish leadership in Shaklawa that it wanted a Kurdish delegation to fly to Washington. Consequently, a delegation headed by Jalal Talabani went to Washington in September 1991.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

It met with Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerkian. In the wake of that visit, the Kurdish delegation also visited London, and after these two visits, the delegation has never returned to Baghdad to sign the accord.

All the political circles concerned know that the United States administration and the British Government have pressured Kurdish leaders not to sign the accord agreed upon with the Iraqi authorities. They have said openly that signing this agreement would strengthen the hand of the Iraqi regime in Baghdad, something the British and American Governments do not want to see happen.

Some members of the Council may be unaware of the following facts: there are Kurds in Iraq, there are Kurds in Iran, there are Kurds in Turkey, there are Kurds in Syria and there are a few Kurds in what used to be the Soviet Union. Iraq is the only country that recognizes in its constitution and in its laws the national and cultural rights of the Kurds. Iraq is the only country where official representatives of the Kurds share power. Since 1974, there has been a post in the Iraqi State for a Kurdish Vice-President. There are Kurdish Ministers in the Iraqi Government; they are at once Kurdish and Iraqi. Perhaps there may be a Turkish Minister in the Turkish Government of Kurdish origin, but he is not allowed to say that he is of Kurdish origin or that he is a Kurd; whereas, in Iraq, a Kurd, whether he is an ordinary citizen or a Minister, can declare that he is a Kurd, because the constitution provides for that right. In Iraq, the Kurdish language is taught from primary school up to university. There is a special television station for the Kurds, and also a special radio station. There is a Department for Kurdish Culture in the Ministry of Information, and a whole division for Kurdish culture in the Scientific Assembly in Iraq.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

Not a single one of these rights is recognized in any of the other countries where Kurds live - not one, not in Iran, not in Turkey, and not in Syria. No radio, no television, no cultural establishment for the Kurds. Kurds are not allowed to share in power: this is banned in the practices of these countries. But the attacks are launched only against Iraq, despite the fact that Iraq is the first country to have recognized the national rights of the Kurds.

Let me give you another example of the double standard used in dealing with the Kurdish question. Yesterday, we heard talk about actions that had been taken to protect Kurds in the north of Iraq, that coalition forces stationed in Turkey at Enkerlik base provide protection for the Kurds against the alleged threat by the Iraqi Government. A few days ago all the Council members must have heard and read that the Turkish Army had entered Iraq in the North, and used its artillery and air force to bomb and shell Kurds and Iraqis in that area and yet the coalition forces that care so much for the lives and rights of the Kurds did nothing.

The other question that has been raised is that of the Shi'ites and the Marshes. In March, I also said that to talk about the problem of the Shi'ites in Iraq would be viewed as irony and cynicism by all Iraqis. I told you that the history of the Arabs and Islam has never witnessed any sectarian strife like that between Catholics and Protestants in Europe. Yes, there are several denominations in Islam, several schools of thought, that have managed to live together for hundreds of years. In the history of Islam, never have Shi'ites persecuted Sunnis or vice versa for sectarian reasons. Therefore, to raise this question about Iraq is but a political and propaganda ploy that is used in the drive to fragment Iraq.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

This business of fragmenting countries is a process that is being prepared on a grand scale not only for Iraq but also around us in the region. Its aim is to restore the old colonialist domination to our countries, and to restore the oil privileges that we removed through nationalization in 1972. Iraq - Shi'ites, Muslims, all the Iraqi people - Muslims, Christians, Arabs, Kurds - do not need the sympathy of colonialist Powers. They do not need the mercies of those Powers that dropped more than 100,000 tons of bombs, shells and the like on all Iraqis, Sunnis, Shi'ites, Christians, Muslims, Arabs and Kurds alike.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

In spite of all the conspiracies and injustices against it, the Iraqi people remains united. It supports its patriotic leadership. When on 11 August 1992 Mr. van der Stoel made allegations about the situation in the Marshes, we suggested to the members of the Council that they dispatch a mission of eminent persons to the area; we proposed that some Council members and some countries of the region should form that committee to visit the area about which Mr. van der Stoel made his allegations.

Why has the Council not sent that mission? Instead, as the representative of the United States told us yesterday, the President of the United States has decided to save the Shiites in Iraq. All of a sudden, the President of the United States discovered that he was greatly interested in the Shiites in Iraq. The Council knows perfectly well that neither the President of the United States nor any other Western leader has any interest whatsoever in the Shiites in Southern Lebanon: the Shiites in southern Lebanon are daily bombed and shelled by Israeli aircraft and artillery. To Western leaders, Shiites come in two colours. Shiites of one colour arouse great interest because they live in an area where oil is to be found: members know of the oil reserves in southern Iraq. But other Shiites live where only oranges and apples grow; oranges and apples do not merit the dispatch of navies and air forces.

The United States blockade operation - the no-fly zone in Iraq - was never meant to protect the Shiites or the marsh-dwellers of southern Iraq. It was decided to create a crisis leading to a military clash with Iraq during the United States election campaign. But we reacted in a way that prevented the achievement of that election goal.

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

They say that since the imposition of the no-fly zone there have been no military movements in southern Iraq. The area is constantly visited by journalists and parliamentarians both Arab and European - even by United States journalists, who have filmed demonstrations in the area in support of the leadership. Footage broadcast on the Cable News Network (CNN) a few weeks ago showed how warmly President Saddam Hussein was received in the Marshes. This exposes the whole game that started on 11 August when Mr. van der Stoel addressed the Security Council.

It has not been my intention to engage in any arguments with the members of the Council. In my statements yesterday and today I have dealt clearly with all the important matters that should concern the Council. But I find it necessary today to comment on yesterday's remarks by the representative of the United States. He said that there was no problem: the Security Council has given Iraq permission to buy food. He said that if food was not reaching the population it was because the Iraqi regime was diverting it to the army. He cited a few figures of millions of tons of food having entered Iraq.

Unfortunately, this is another blatant example of disinformation techniques. Yes, the Council theoretically allows Iraq to buy food and medical supplies, but at the same time it prevents Iraq from selling anything that would generate the income needed to buy food and medicine. Iraq's assets abroad are frozen and they cannot be used to buy food and medicine. Besides, by its resolution 778 (1992) the Council seized those assets.

The other side, the American side constantly repeats what its representative said here yesterday: that the Iraqi regime is feeding the

(Mr. Aziz, Iraq)

army, but not its people. Ambassador Perkins, we Iraqis find that claim ridiculous. The Iraqi Government is a part of the people of Iraq; the people of Iraq love and trust their leaders - but that is a fact that is not to the liking of the United States Administration. The absurdity is this: how could the Iraqi army be consuming all those millions of tons of food cited by the representative of the United States in his statement? The only possibility is that the Iraqi army numbers some 18 million. And that is true: all 18 million people of Iraq constitute an army for Iraq, an army that defends the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and dignity of Iraq.

I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the opportunity to address the Council this morning. I want to reaffirm our desire to continue the dialogue with the Security Council and to continue clarifying the facts: that is the main reason for our request to meet with the Council. We are not seeking arguments, unless they are forced upon us. We do not want to level accusations, unless accusations are levelled at us. We have the right to defend ourselves and to clarify the facts as we see them. I hope we shall continue our meetings with a view to reaching better understanding and constructive cooperation between Iraq and the Security Council.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Minister of Information of Kuwait, His Excellency Sheikh Saud Nasser al-Sabah, has asked to speak. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Sheikh Saud Nasser AL-SABAH (Kuwait): I had not wished to dignify the statement of the Iraqi representative with a reply. But since he has gone into certain important topics under discussion in the Council, I believe that it is my duty to respond to some of the most crucial points that he has covered with lies, fabrications, deceptions.

The first point is the border issue. Again we have heard from the Iraqi representative statements which bring back the memory of the situation on 2 August 1990. He has talked about Iraq's historical rights. I believe that this matter has already been resolved through the existing agreements and treaties between Iraq and Kuwait dating back to 1932 and 1963, which, furthermore, were referred to and recognized in Security Council resolution 687 (1990). We repeatedly hear the Iraqi representative engaging in rhetoric here to deny and repudiate Iraq's international commitments. Iraq accepted resolution 687 (1990), and this is the issue we are now discussing further here.

The border problem was the cause of the whole issue. The Iraqi representative referred to Operation "Desert Storm". "Desert Storm" did not arise in a vacuum. "Desert Storm" arose because of the Iraqi invasion and brutal occupation of Kuwait. That is the issue. Iraq is responsibile for what took place on 2 August 1990. The world community and the Security Council condemned what Iraq did on 2 August.

The Iraqi representative referred to the detainees and the hostages, and again said that Iraq does not hold any detainees or hostages. He said that the blame and the responsibility had to be placed on the war for the liberation of Kuwait. Iraq occupied Kuwait for seven months - seven brutal months in which its forces killed, brutalized, raped and victimized the people of Kuwait and people of other nationalities. It is Iraq's responsibility to

(Sheikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah, Kuwait)

account for every single person who is missing. We have forwarded to Iraq file upon file of the names of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals, and it has not responded to any of them. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been active in Iraq trying to locate these people, but with no cooperation from the Iraqi regime.

They talk about the non-existence of detention centres in Iraq: they only have "small prisons". But the whole of Iraq is a detention centre. Prisoners are being held in Iraq with the full knowledge of the Iraqi regime. The Iraqi representative said that they have no interest in keeping them. We are very well aware of the interest Iraq has in keeping our people in prisons and detention centres in Iraq: it is to create problems inside Kuwait, to split the unity of the Kuwaiti people, and to deprive those families of their loved ones - husbands, sons, and brothers - still missing or being detained in Iraq.

This is not the first time the Iraqis have held hostages. Let us think of very recent history, when many Americans and British, French and other Europeans were held as hostages during the occupation of Kuwait. They are trying to make us believe that they are the innocent party in this whole thing. To the people listening to this whole discussion, it would appear that they were the victim and we the perpetrator. The fact that they are turning the story around in such a ludicrous way can only lead to the conclusion that we are not dealing with a responsible regime or Government. They will go to any length to deny, to lie and to deceive.

The Iraqi representative also referred to one incident regarding the equipment stolen from Kuwait. Iraq ransacked the whole country - public buildings and private buildings; it did not leave anything untouched in Kuwait. But he has the audacity to say that no incubators were stolen during

(Sheikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah, Kuwait)

the occupation of Kuwait. I have before me an official document - S/24806 - signed, before a representative of the United Nations, by Khdhayer Waheed Al-Murshidy, a representative of Iraq in the Ministry of Health, when Iraq delivered back some of the medical equipment it had stolen from Kuwait, including incubators. Iraq denies stealing medical equipment, including incubators, but this document is here for the Security Council to review.

These lies and deceptions go to the heart of another problem - the problem of detainees and hostages. We urge the Security Council and member nations of the international community not to take at face value what the Iraqis have said. There are hundreds still missing inside Iraq, and we urge the Council to investigate this in any way possible.

The Iraqi representative also talked about other issues with which, I am sure, many members are somewhat disgusted. He said that Iraq had not received any claims for private property from people in Kuwait. He talks about justice; he talks about equity. I think he is the last person even to know the meaning of "justice" and "equity" as those words are used in the law books. Many claims have been forwarded from private individuals for their property stolen from Kuwait. Iraq sent the claims back, saying it could not be responsible for any private property. This is another example of the Iraqi exercise of defiance of Security Council resolutions and the world Powers.

I do not wish to dwell on many other issues, because I do not believe they deserve to be addressed here. But it has become quite evident to the world community and the Security Council that we are facing here a regime which is going back on its word on one of the core parts of the whole issue. The core of the problem is that we had the war in January 1991 because of the invasion of Kuwait that had taken place in August 1990.

(Sheikh Saud Nasser Al-Sabah, Kuwait)

The Iraqi representative sits here now as though he has been victimized by the world. But we are the victims. We are the victims and Iraq is the perpetrator - not the other way around. I hope he understands this when he makes his future statements.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I call on the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, His Excellency Mr. Tariq Aziz.

Mr. AZIZ (Iraq): When I came to the Council, I did not want, and I still do not want, to enter into personal arguments and to make personal accusations. The Council listened carefully to my statement yesterday and to my statement this morning. There was nothing personal in those two statements, except on one occasion when I had to make a clarification regarding an accusation and allegation made by one of the representatives in the Council. Now we have heard a statement full of personal attacks.

First of all, concerning the question of those missing in action, in my statement this morning I asked the Council to invite the representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to make an objective statement on the matter.

Secondly, concerning the question of property, I asked the Council to invite Mr. Foran, who is in charge of that operation, to give an objective account of the issue.

In spite of my basic desire not to go into personal attacks, I feel obliged to remind the Council that the person who was addressing it a moment ago is the same person who trained his teenage daughter to lie to the United States Congress about the ill-famed story of the incubators. When I mentioned that story, I did not say - and the Council heard me very well - that incubators were not taken from Kuwait to Iraq. I referred to that alleged, fabricated story, which was presented to the United States Congress, that Iraqi soldiers forced Kuwaiti babies out of those incubators, an action that led to their death. Later on it became known that the whole story had been fabricated, and that the innocent child who told it to the Congress was the daughter of the person who was addressing the Council, who was then the Ambassador of Kuwait to the United States.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Minister of Information of Kuwait wishes to speak. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Sheikh Saud Nasser AL-SABAH (Kuwait): I regret to take more of your time, Mr. President. I know that time is very valuable to you and to the other members of the Security Council, but I wish to respond once again to the ludicrous comments made by the man sitting across the aisle here.

His description of a story's being fabricated is an utter lie on his part. For him to bring a story that was true, factual - every aspect of it - into this Council, regarding a young, 16-year-old girl, demonstrates again how people of this kind tend to treat human beings and human suffering.

I wish to say very clearly and unequivocally that I am proud and honoured to be the father of that girl, who endured the horror of the Iraqi occupation for two months in Kuwait. And I repeat that every father would be as proud and honoured to have a courageous girl go through that. If it does not give him honour to have a girl like that, he does not deserve to be a father.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As no other member of the Council wishes to put questions to the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, I propose, with the consent of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting now. I invite members to meet immediately for consultations.

The meeting was suspended at 12.05 and resumed at 12.55 p.m.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): In concluding the present stage of the consideration of the item on the agenda, I have been authorized, following consultations among members of the Security Council, to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The views of the Security Council having been expressed through its President and by the statements of its members on the extent of compliance by the Government of Iraq with its obligations under the relevant Security Council resolutions, the Council has listened with close attention to the statements by the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq. The Council regrets the lack of any indication in the statements by the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq of how the Government of Iraq intends to comply with the resolutions of the Council. It also regrets the baseless threats, allegations and attacks launched by the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq against the Council, the Special Commission, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Boundary Demarcation Commission and the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990). The Council rejects in toto these threats, allegations and attacks.

"Having heard all the interventions in the debate, the Council reiterates its full support for the statement made by the President of the Council on its behalf at the opening of the 3139th meeting (S/24836).

"In the view of the Security Council, while there have been some positive steps, the Government of Iraq has not yet complied

(The President)

fully and unconditionally with its obligations, must do so and must immediately take the appropriate actions in this regard."

The Security Council has thus concluded the current stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the item.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.